

CITY OF IMPERIAL BEACH
CITY COUNCIL
PLANNING COMMISSION
PUBLIC FINANCING AUTHORITY
HOUSING AUTHORITY
IMPERIAL BEACH REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY SUCCESSOR AGENCY

SPECIAL WORKSHOP MEETING

SEPTEMBER 23, 2015 – 6:00 P.M.

Community Room (Behind City Hall)
825 Imperial Beach Boulevard
Imperial Beach, CA 91932

CALL TO ORDER BY MAYOR

Mayor Dedina called the Special Workshop Meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL BY CITY CLERK

Councilmembers Present:	Spriggs, Bragg, Patton (arrived at 7:14 p.m.)
Councilmembers Absent:	None
Mayor Present	Dedina
Mayor Pro Tem Present:	Bilbray
Staff Present:	City Manager Hall, Assistant City Manager Dush, City Clerk Hald, City Attorney Lyon, Administrative Services Director Bradley, Public Works Director Levien, Public Safety Director French, Sheriff's Lieutenant Brown

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

REPORTS

1. GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE CODE COMPLIANCE PROCESS, MUNICIPAL CODE ISSUES, AND SPECIFIC AREAS OF ENFORCEMENT. (0470-90)

Assistant City Manager Dush gave a PowerPoint presentation on the item. He explained the purpose of code compliance is to protect the health, safety, welfare and appearance of the Imperial Beach community. He reviewed the City's code compliance process, noting that it is currently a complaint driven process. He reported on the three different types of complaints and provided feedback on each type:

- Type 1: RVs, parked cars/parking, abandoned vehicles, unsightly landscaping, debris, rental/landlord tenant disputes, debris

Feedback:

- It can be inconsistent due to the complaint driven process
- It can be spite driven
- It can be retaliatory between parties
- Suggested looking at life safety aspect as opposed to aesthetics

- Type 2: Short-term Rentals

Feedback:

- Incompatible uses such as having a transient-type use in a residential zone
- Regulate what currently exists
- There is lost revenue by not regulating it and allowing the activity to occur

- Type 3: Food Trucks

Feedback:

- There has been a desire to broaden/allow food trucks
- Concern from the brick & mortar businesses
- Issue of fairness

The policy direction he sought was:

1. Is there a desire to modify the existing code compliance process?
2. Should Code Enforcement become pro-active and should deference be given to health and safety issues?
3. Should a different methodology using the existing complaint driven approach be considered?
4. Should food trucks be expanded within the City?
5. Should short term rentals be expanded within the City from where they are currently allowed?

He spoke about some of the City's achievements since the completion of "The Big Picture" and mentioned the role code compliance played in improving the community. He suggested the creation of a work plan through a series of neighborhood open houses (utilizing the neighborhood boundaries within the General Plan/LCP) and developing a series of questions to receive input on regarding code compliance and other issues.

Public Comments:

Kim Frink spoke in support for a proactive approach on life safety issues and for having two or more complaints on appearance issues. She also spoke in support for allowing residents to store Recreational Vehicle's (RVs) on driveways.

Alan Jackson spoke in support for storing RV's on driveways. He stressed that the focus should be on life safety issues and he was opposed to a complaint driven process.

Richard Pilgrim agreed with the comments made by the two previous public speakers. He summarized his main concerns as being safety, having a dedicated pad for RVs and appearance.

Ed Kravitz complimented the City for holding this meeting and for being transparent. He encouraged the City to be equitable if it is going to regulate trailers.

Gene Hillger spoke in support for a proactive approach, he stated that citizen complaints should not drive the City's priorities and there should be a focus on life safety issues.

Anne Ryan spoke in opposition to a complaint driven process.

Shirley Nakawatase spoke in support for holding workshops in each neighborhood as each area has different priorities and needs. She also spoke in support for revisiting the City's codes and the City's Design Guidelines.

Mark Williams complained about the City's code enforcement process, he was opposed to keeping the identity of complainants confidential, he asked the City to stop sending out certified letters and instead speak directly to people, he complained about the administrative hearing

process, and he spoke in support for having RVs in neighborhoods (additional speaking time donated by Raelynn Warren).

With regard to Mixed-use zones, Ruth Cole spoke in support for residential zones complying with residential standards and for not allowing residential development to come up to the lot line as allowed with commercial development. She asked the City Council/Planning Commission to clarify the zoning.

Brian Bilbray asked City Council and City staff to consider a process that is more open to dialogue and has citizen participation. He spoke in support for having a Planning Commission comprised of citizens to address these types of issues every month.

Mayor Dedina showed photos of properties that are in need of improvement. He spoke in support for a proactive and strategic code enforcement approach, to focus on areas with blight, to be thoughtful on how to spend energy, to engage residents in the process, and to be equitable and fair.

Councilmember Bragg provided background on the City's successful efforts in engaging the public in the past by holding neighborhood meetings. Regarding RVs, she stated there should be dedicated pads and she mentioned safety concerns with regard to RVs parked near sidewalks. She spoke in support for a solution based approach and for having more than one complaint for situations such as barking dogs.

Councilmember Spriggs spoke in support for getting public input from the neighborhoods that are specified in "The Big Picture" document, to find out the priorities and concerns in each neighborhood, and to update "The Big Picture" document. He spoke about the need to determine if a proactive or a complaint based system is best. He expressed concern about the time and money spent on the RV issue as a result of complaints. He recommended a review of the code and possibly making adjustments in terms of distance RVs are parked from the sidewalk. He supported a proactive policy driven approach that is based on the highest priorities, with health, safety, crime, infestation and blight issues being the highest. He noted the importance of addressing issues that are of a common concern to the community. With regard to short term rentals, he stated there could be some solutions but they are pending at the State legislature level.

Assistant City Manager Dush stated, in summary, that staff will:

- look into a more proactive approach with blight, health and safety as priority issues
- review the codes and determine if changes are needed
- report back to City Council on how to address the overall themes discussed
- hold off on short term rentals until there is direction from the State

He stated the only pending issue is input on food trucks.

Councilmember Bragg stated there needs to be a two-pronged approach where there is still a complaint driven process (for barking dogs as an example) and a more proactive approach while utilizing a priority list. She also expressed concern about abandoned vehicles which could be an attractive nuisance and could bring down property values. She said complaint Types 2 and 3 could be topics for another meeting.

Councilmember Spriggs encouraged City staff to look at how other small communities: are handling code enforcement, implemented the proactive approach efficiently, used

community/public relations to promote the process as being fair and objective. He also stated lessons learned from other communities would be helpful. For fairness, there needs to be clear standards that directly relate to health, safety, welfare and community values. He spoke in support for moving towards a proactive approach, for City staff to return with a robust discussion on complaint Type 1.

Mayor Dedina agreed with revisiting "The Big Picture", for returning to City Council with a more robust discussion and further review. He spoke about community engagement, revitalizing blighted areas, and identifying disincentives for property owners to improve their homes (such as an expensive fee system for simple home improvements).

Councilmember Bragg spoke about why the neighborhood meeting concept was so successful in the past and she supported this type of approach.

Assistant City Manager Dush stated that the notices regarding the RV issue will be held in abeyance until City staff is given clear direction on how to proceed. In response to a member of the public, he stated those who received these type of notices will be notified of the next meeting.

Councilmember Patton announced that he is late because he is a school teacher and participated in an open house at his school this evening. He stated that code enforcement is a very important topic to him, that there are a lot of nuances involved and a decision cannot be made after one meeting. He spoke about the need to listen to the public and to find a balance to keep a clean and healthy community without having to issue tickets for revenue.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Dedina adjourned the Special Workshop meeting at 7:18 p.m.

_____/s/
Serge Dedina,
Mayor

_____/s/
Jacqueline M. Hald, MMC
City Clerk